

COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE

REQUIREMENTS

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This page provides information about the requirements of these L&S degrees:

- Bachelor of Arts (BA)
- Bachelor of Science (BS)
- Journalism Bachelor of Arts (JBA)
- Journalism Bachelor of Science (JBS)

Consult the Guide Majors & Certificates (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#majorscertificatetext>) section for degree requirements for the L&S degrees: Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics, Engineering, and Physics; Bachelor of Landscape Architecture; Bachelor of Music: Performance; Bachelor of Music: Education and Bachelor of Social Work.

Requirements for the BA, BS, JBA, and JBS degrees:

- University General Education (p. 1)
 - Language (p. 1)
 - Mathematics (p. 1)
 - Breadth: Exploration in the Liberal Arts and Sciences (p. 2)
- Major: Understanding a Field of Study (p. 2)
- Liberal Arts and Science Credits (p. 2)
- Mastery of Intermediate/Advanced Liberal Arts and Science Credit (p. 2)
- Residency Requirement (p. 2)
- Quality of Work (p. 2)

CATALOG YEARS

A student's degree requirements are established according to student-specific academic milestones. These are often referred to as "catalog year" policies. Each school and college at UW-Madison may have different catalog year policies. In L&S, the catalog policies determine the requirements of the degree as follows:

- University General Education Requirements (UGER): Year and term of first matriculation to any accredited institution of higher learning, after graduating from secondary school.
- L&S degree requirements: Year and term of first matriculation to any accredited institution of higher learning, after graduating from secondary school.
- L&S major/certificate requirements: Year and term of program declaration.

The Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS (p. 3)) applies these catalog year policies automatically.

Students should consult the catalog-year edition of the Guide that applies to each requirement of their programs. For example, a student's Guide

for L&S degree requirements may differ from their Guide for major requirements.

Students have the option to adopt new catalog-year rules if a new version of the curriculum benefits them. Students wishing to update their catalog year for major/certificate requirements should contact the advisor of that program. For L&S or UGER requirements, students should contact L&S Undergraduate Academic Deans' Services.

UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION

Students in L&S must satisfy the University General Education requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduestudytext>). Most General Education courses are taught in L&S and provide foundations in communication, quantitative reasoning, ethnic studies, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Language

The College of Letters & Science teaches over fifty languages (<https://languages.wisc.edu/>) other than English. The study of a language other than English contributes in an important way to a broad education in a multi-lingual world where many people do not speak or read English and where much of the knowledge that is disseminated may never appear in English. Knowledge of a language other than English is important for an appreciation of the culture of the people using that language, and it also helps students to understand the structure and complexities of their own language. Degrees in L&S require language study to ensure that all students have access to the knowledge, skills, and perspectives studying a language affords.

L&S Language requirements differ between the BA and the BS degrees:

- BA students complete either the fourth unit of a language other than English, or the third unit of one language other than English in combination with the second unit of a different language other than English.
- BS students complete the third unit of a language other than English.

A language unit is one semester of college language study, one year of language study in the same language in high school, or two years of language study in the same language in middle school. This requirement can only be met by units of study in languages other than English.

Students may complete the L&S Language requirements in various ways:

- Through units completed in high school
- Through units completed at UW-Madison or at another accredited college or university
- Through departmental placement and assessment methods (<https://languages.wisc.edu/new-students/#placement-and-policies>)

Students with a documented disability in second language acquisition who believe they cannot meet the Language requirement for their L&S degree may apply for an accommodation. If approved, students will be allowed to complete the Language requirement with alternate course work known as a "Language Substitution Package." Information about this process is available at L&S Undergraduate Academic Deans' Services (<https://deans.ls.wisc.edu/non-english-language-substitution-package/>).

Mathematics

Mathematics and mathematical reasoning are foundational to learning in nearly all areas of inquiry and are thus a key component of a liberal arts and science education.

- For BA students, the L&S mathematics requirement is satisfied by completing the University General Education Requirements for Quantitative Reasoning A and Quantitative Reasoning B.
- BS students must complete two Intermediate or Advanced courses, each at least three credits, in either Mathematics, Computer Sciences, or Statistics. Of the two additional courses, only one may be from Computer Sciences and only one may be from Statistics.

Breadth: Exploration in the Liberal Arts and Sciences

Students who are liberally educated understand the connections between many scholarly approaches to world knowledge. The L&S Breadth requirements expose students to three general areas of knowledge: arts and humanities, social sciences, and the natural sciences. Combined, these broad areas challenge students to understand different ways (methods) of knowing and to connect various subjects of inquiry.

The three areas of Breadth are:

- Humanities, which primarily focuses on understanding humans as thinkers, citizens, and creators of art, literature, and culture. Courses that meet the Humanities Breadth requirement are designated as Humanities or Literature.
- Social Sciences which primarily focuses on understanding humans and their interactions in societies, institutions, and systems. Courses that meet the Social Science Breadth requirement are designated as Social Science.
- Natural Sciences, which primarily focuses on systematic study of the natural and physical world, and with the use of abstraction and logical reasoning. Courses that meet the Natural Science Breadth requirement are designated as Biological Science, Physical Science, or Natural Science.

Many courses carry more than one Breadth designation (e.g., "Humanities or Social Science"). These courses always approach their topics from these complementary "ways of knowing," but may only count toward one of the Breadth requirements and cannot be split between two areas.

BA students must complete these Breadth requirements:

- 12 credits in Humanities, to include at least 6 credits in Literature.
- 12 credits in Social Sciences.
- 12 credits in Natural Sciences, to include at least one 3+ credit course in Biological Science and one 3+ credit course in Physical Science.

BS students must complete these Breadth requirements:

- 12 credits in Humanities, to include at least 6 credits in Literature.
- 12 credits in Social Sciences.
- 12 credits in Natural Sciences, to include at least 6 credits in Biological Science and 6 credits in Physical Science.

MAJOR: UNDERSTANDING A FIELD OF STUDY

L&S offers more than 60 majors and special degree programs (p. 2). Completing a major allows students to deeply investigate at least one subject or issue. Work in the major requires a progression of skills, knowledge, and values, where advanced learning opportunities in upper-level coursework grow from and expand upon earlier experiences. In advanced coursework, senior capstone, or independent research projects, students are asked to synthesize what they have learned and apply it in new situations. By the conclusion of their studies, students are educated to understand themselves and their society, to develop their

intellectual powers outside of a university setting, and to make productive contributions to the world around them.

Students must complete at least one L&S major to earn their degree.

Students are required to declare a major before reaching senior standing (86 earned credits). The process to declare a major is outlined in the How to Get In (p. 2) section of each major. All L&S majors require students to meet quality of work (p. 2) and residency (p. 2) requirements.

LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCE CREDITS

Of the 120 credits required for the bachelor's degree (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/>), students must earn at least 108 credits in courses designated as Liberal Arts and Science courses. These courses promote the core educational values of the liberal arts and sciences:

- skilled written and verbal communication, excelling in formulating and expressing a point of view; reflecting and questioning current knowledge through reading; research and consideration of the views of others.
- the ability to draw flexibly upon and apply the modes of thought of the major areas of knowledge.
- knowledge of our basic cultural heritage as a multifaceted and often contested history.

MASTERY OF INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCE CREDIT

Students are expected to challenge themselves in rigorous courses and achieve deeper knowledge of subject matter as they progress in their degree. To meet this expectation, students must:

- complete at least 60 credits in Liberal Arts and Science courses with either the Intermediate or Advanced level designation.
- earn a minimum 2.000 GPA on all Intermediate and Advanced courses.

RESIDENCY

Students must have 30 overall credits in residence to meet the campus requirement. In addition, L&S students must complete at least 30 credits in residence as a Senior (after 86 earned degree credits) and 15 credits at the upper-level in each declared major. These requirements are intended to ensure that students have a substantive and meaningful academic experience in classes taught by UW-Madison faculty. These credits do not have to be contiguous for the requirement to be met.

A course is considered in residence if the student enrolls for credit through UW-Madison. This includes any courses completed:

- at UW-Madison, in any instructional mode (in-person, online, or hybrid).
- through a UW-Madison administered program, either domestically or internationally (i.e., Study Abroad through International Academic Programs).

Courses are considered on campus if they are both in residence and taught by a UW-Madison instructor in-person, online, or in a hybrid mode of instruction. Courses taken through a UW-Madison study abroad program are not on campus.

QUALITY OF WORK

A student's overall quality of work and their quality of work in their chosen major(s) are important measures of a student's mastery of knowledge. The

L&S quality of work requirements are all computed on courses taken in residence, and set a minimum 2.000 GPA in four specific areas:

- University GPA, computed using all graded courses at UW–Madison.
- Intermediate/Advanced, computed using courses designated Liberal Arts and Science (LAS) with Intermediate or Advanced level. Courses taken on a refresher basis (p.) do not compute toward this requirement.
- Major, computed in each major using all courses that meet the requirements of that major and all courses in the subject listing of each major (if applicable). Courses taken on a refresher basis (p.) do not compute toward this requirement.
- Upper-Level in Major, computed in each major using courses designated as upper-level for that major. Courses taken on a refresher basis (p.) do not compute toward this requirement.

DEGREE AUDIT REPORTING SYSTEM (DARS)

The requirements for every L&S degree, major, and certificate program are audited using the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) (<https://enroll.wisc.edu/dars/>). DARS is the official report of student degree progress, requirement fulfillment, and eligibility to graduate with an L&S degree, additional major, or certificate program.

Students should use DARS regularly (<https://kb.wisc.edu/21634/>) in conjunction with academic advising to see how their completed and in-progress coursework satisfies the requirements of their L&S program(s). When a student applies to graduate, L&S will use DARS for all their declared programs to determine whether they have completed all requirements of the degree and are eligible to graduate. Students can generate and review their DARS in the Student Center via My UW (<https://my.wisc.edu>).

Students may also use DARS to explore L&S programs in which they are interested but not declared by using the “What-If” DARS (<https://kb.wisc.edu/94068/>) available in their Student Center. They may also include courses they plan to take in a future term and audit the results using DARS. When exploring L&S programs, students are encouraged to consult Guide, their assigned academic advisor, and the academic advisor of the program they are considering.